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ABSTRACT

This book reports on a nine-year longitudinal study of the postsecondary educational decision-making process among a sample of high school students in Indiana. The study surveyed large numbers of students and also conducted in-depth interviews with a small number of students and parents. The book is organized into four parts, each with two chapters. The opening chapter of the first three parts relates the experiences of eight students who tell how they made their post-high school decisions. The second chapter in each of these three parts is a companion piece, reporting findings and conclusions from the study's surveys and interviews. The two chapters of part 4 explore what happened to some of the students in the study based on interviews with a subsample of 56 students after they had been out of high school approximately seven months and again about four years later. The final chapter reports conclusions and recommendations. The study found differences in the factors that influence students' aspirations and those that influence their achievements; differences were also found between influences on the college decisions of ninth-grade students and those of twelfth-grade students. An appendix provides an overview of relevant theories and previous research. (Contains 106 references.) (DB)

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